

THE NEW FEDERALIST

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Arielle Rouby

Though the European Federation is still far from being a reality, it can easily be argued that the year 2004 has been marked by major events and sometimes even by important historical achievements. Indeed, 2004 started with the re-unification of the continent on 1st May 2004 and continued with the European Parliament elections and the Barosso I and II Commission elections. It was then followed by the successive green lights of the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council on the start of membership talks with Turkey. And last but not least, the European Constitution was adopted and signed by the Heads of State and Government.

Thus the face of Europe and in particular the borders of the European Union changed dramatically in 2004 and they will most likely continue to change with the upcoming enlargements. Therefore it seems essential to focus in this edition on our new neighbours, especially on Turkey, but also on Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine. Analysing the relationship between the EU and its closest neighbours always ends up by asking the question whether this country shall one day join the Union or not? In other words: neighbours IN or OUT?

The EU after forty years of hesitation paves the way for Turkey's membership

Eventually on 13th December 2004 Turkey obtained a long-sought offer, namely to begin its membership talks next October, with the prospect of becoming a full member of the Union.

Despite this historic deal Ankara's path to membership will be rough and rocky. Turkey is facing a huge task in meeting the Copenhagen Criteria, which includes strict standards for human rights, minority protection and the rule of law. More challenging for Erdogan is Europe's call for what many in Turkey will see as a social revolution: women's rights, freedom of religion and the necessity to address difficult historic questions of Turkey's past, including the fate of Armenians during World War I and the full recognition of Cyprus. Though faced with what will clearly be a long and difficult trek toward making Turkey an EU member, the EU now opened its doors to Turkey.

Are the European doors open for other neighbours as well?

While all eyes are on Turkey's EU entry talks, it is worth remembering that EU leaders also gave their final agreement for membership in 2007 to Bulgaria and Romania. Croatia is also moving closer, since negotiations with Croatia could be opened as early as

in April, provided Croatia cooperates fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia.

Furthermore, in December 2004 the European Commission has also approved agreements with seven of its neighbours, in a bid to spread stability on EU's borders. But does it imply that these countries will one day be able to join the European family? No. According to the new External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner this deal was made to prevent, the "dividing line being drawn across Europe after the enlargement". The recent events in Ukraine contributed to strengthen the ties between the EU and Ukraine.

...And what about the European Constitution: is it in or out?

Even if the Turkish issue and the relations with the new neighbourhood are essential, they would not replace the importance of our main focus of 2005 and probably 2006: the ratification of the European Constitution! This constitutional Treaty is crucial for making the EU more efficient with 25, 27, 28 or more Member States. It also needs to be ratified in so far as it would make the EU more democratic, more accountable to the citizens and to other actors on the international scene.

In order for the Constitution to enter into force, all 25 Member States must ratify it - either by referendum or via national parliaments. If all countries pass the Constitution, it will enter into force on 1st November 2006. So far two countries, Lithuania and Hungary, have ratified the Constitution via their national parliaments. Latvia is expected to be the next to ratify the Treaty in January. The European Parliament showed with the adoption of the Corbett/Mendez de Vigo report its strong support for the European Constitution and thus gave an encouraging message to all the Member States to ratify the Constitution. The generally pro-European Spaniards will be the first EU citizens to vote on the Constitution on 20th February. Nonetheless, ten other referenda will also take place, and not all of them are won in advance. The ratification will be a long and uncertain process, therefore we all need to join our forces and voices for a strong and successful YES Campaign!



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How far can the European Union expand?

Matej Zakonjšek

The EU should decide what kind of union it wants to be. Without answering this question about the future of the EU first, it is impossible to give an answer on how far it should expand.

"...a different culture, a different approach, a different way of life" was argued by former French president and president of the Convention on the future of Europe, Mr. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, when asked about the possibility of Turkey's membership in the EU. Should the criteria for membership be the same culture, the same way of life? What kind of common culture is shared by a farmer on the Greek island of Rodos and a manager in Dublin? What do the ways of life in Palermo and Helsinki have in common?

The only thing that is really shared by all members of the EU is a blue flag with yellow stars on their official buildings.

Before talking whether to include Turkey, Ukraine, Israel or Palestine in the EU, we first have to get some things straight - what kind of a Union do we want to live in. Answering questions about the purposes of the EU and defining its goals will also give answer to where are the Union's horizons. Without those questions answered, the EU is behaving confusingly, affected by daily moods of politicians and their respected parties in every country and their electoral needs at the time. This is not only bad for the EU itself, since it is lacking clear policy, but is hugely unfair and insincere concerning all applicant countries.

When EU officials are presented with these questions, they are more than happy to point at the Copenhagen criteria as golden rules for applicants. The only problem is that the Copenhagen criteria can be stretched as much as you want in order to include or exclude a country you want or do not want to see in the EU. If we look at the example of Cyprus, we have an island that is divided by a wall that goes through Nicosia (or Lefkosa) with destroyed buildings in the buffer zone and UN soldiers in the middle. The Turkish part is officially called "occupied territories". Technically speaking, as of May 1st, part of the EU is occupied by a foreign army! These and other examples can serve as a common view in applicant countries that an EU membership is a moving target. This is especially seen when considering Turkey's application for the EU. Turkey is the first country when Copenhagen criteria are just not enough. This is shown by EU politicians, who are explaining that the EU is a "Christian club" and have problems with Muslim

religion or - as in the case of Mr. d'Estaing - with the Turkish way of life, culture and geography. It is quite obvious that the question of future EU expansion will be one of the biggest issues of the coming years.

The EU needs to make a decision on what kind of a future form it wants to have. Does the EU want to be a Christian club that excludes all Muslim applicants such as Turkey, Albania, Bosnia or Morocco? Or does it want to be a club of rich states, setting a GDP limit as a barrier for entrance in the EU? All models can be argued but setting clear policy on the issue will be much better than maintaining the situation as it is now, where everybody has their own set of ideas and is playing its own games with the applicants.

My opinion is that it would be best for the EU, if it would be more a union of ideas and values rather than a union of certain benefits and forced technicalities. We have to adopt a set of values that represent the Europe of today. The European integration process started as an economic integration. Let us preserve that basis of and add it respect for human rights and minorities and voila, we got the basis for the functioning of an expanded EU. As *The Economist*¹ had argued in December 2002: "why should geography or religion dictate, who might join? If the European idea is to inspire, it ought to be about values, not maps or tribes". In the expanded Union of 25, as it is argued so many times, it will be even harder to define what are EU interests in certain issues and will see even more "stubborn" countries that are party breakers. But why is that so bad? Let us celebrate diversity of Europe in the way of showing that diversity in the EU actually works. If diversity is the thing that can make EU stronger this will never be achieved with all night sessions and arm twisting meetings. The principle of diversity is that we allow others to do things in the way we would do different. But with one eye always on strict respect for human rights and freedoms. A quest to compete with United States, to have a unified opinion on everything from the war in Iraq, to the size of fish that you can catch, will bring us in a circle of all night meetings that will slowly but surely paralyze the inspirational spirit that the EU was made of.

Guehenno² is arguing that "having lost the comfort of our geographical boundaries, we must in fact rediscover what creates the bonds between the humans that constitute a community". And if these bonds are values of human rights and respect for minorities I do not see a reason why we should keep applicants that accept these values out of the EU. With that we would undermine the core principles upon which the EU was constructed on. It is time for the EU to rediscover its own destiny. And this time is now.

Answering questions about the purposes of the EU and defining its goals will also give answer to where are the Union's horizons.



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¹ *The Economist* (2002); Turkey belongs in Europe, December 17th 2002.

² Guehenno, J.M. (1995); *The End of Nation-State* (Minneapolis/London: University of Minnesota Press).

Swallow up instead of deepening? Is this the right moment for negotiations with Turkey?

Philipp Hessel and Florian Ziegenbalg

The recently enlarged European Union enters a crucial stage of its development. After the historic enlargement round a new EU has to tackle many challenges, and it will be crucial for the potential success of the European project, that a responsible view on the Union's capacities is being adopted. Having said this, asks for a close look at the question of opening accession negotiations with Turkey.

Facing these immense challenges of the new EU, it is neither reasonable nor responsible to discuss Turkey's accession at this crucial moment.

It is undeniable, that Turkey has been given a European perspective since the 1960ies - however vague it might have been. Recently some major reforms towards the full implementation of democracy and the rule of law have been adopted and it is obviously in the interest of the EU that Turkey will continue in this way. It is, besides that, in the exceptional interest of Turkey itself to become a democratic state, and the European perspective must not be the one only incentive.

It might be helpful to change the perspective, if we intend to judge the current situation objectively. The 2004 enlargement round is without any historic parallel, having changed the Union's face and structure considerably. Not only did the number of member states increase remarkably - with all its consequences for the institutional and administrative structure of the



Union - but also the internal heterogeneity. In 2003 the GDP per capita ranged between 40% and 215 % of the EU-25 average (source: European Commission, press release, 3rd December 2004). Looking at the cohesion processes in Ireland, Spain and Portugal makes clear, that a lot of efforts will be necessary to reduce the socio-economic differences between the Member States, resp. their regions. The quarrel over the financial perspectives will be a major challenge for the EU in the next two years.

Today, no one can predict precisely, what compromise will be agreed upon and what conditions for cohesion measures might be possible. We can assume that these negotiations will overshadow the whole political process in the Union and might affect as well its foreign policy capability. Under these circumstances, it is highly questionable, which credibility and validity negotiations with Turkey will have.

Furthermore, in terms of efficiency and accountability the enlarged Union is not well prepared under the conditions of the Nice treaty. The draft Constitution is only a first step to get rid of present deficiencies. Its shortcomings and the regular difficulties to find agreements between the national governments are one of many signs of the internal difficulties the EU faces right now. The new constitution, when in force, has the potential to reduce the dangers of blockade and of growing mistrust of European citizens. However, the preceding ratification process will be the litmus test for the cohesion and the unity of the Union. Negotiations with Turkey would therefore take place in an atmosphere of uncertainty, and before a further obligatory progress in the constitutionalisation process. Its final aim has to be the creation of a truly pan-European federation, in which all Member States can take part.

Facing these immense challenges of the new EU, it is neither reasonable nor responsible to discuss Turkey's accession at this crucial moment. Only a consolidated Union can be a credible negotiation partner. For the time being, the EU should develop a credible alternative for Turkey, which is more than a refusal of the membership perspective. It is questionable if this alternative would have to be a "new" or "privileged" relationship. The EU and Turkey are already connected with a special economic, societal and political relationship, forming a network, which only exists with a few other third countries. This existing relationship is a sound foundation for further cooperation and should not be concealed entirely by the debate about full membership.

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Turkish denial or European uneasiness?

Sandra Fernandes

Let us talk about Turkey, but then we must start by re-focusing on the real questions of the debate and stop speculating. France has been overwhelmed by passionate and subjective views on the Turkish accession debate. In fact the real issues have not been formulated properly.

There is no "Turkish exception" but a European exclusivity in search of identity. The question is not about to know whether Turkey is European or whether it is within the European geographical borders. If Europe really needed the accession of Turkey for any reason, people would have found historical, geographical, cultural criterion to certify the genuine "European-ness" of Turkey. Facing the contrary situation, people tend to stigmatise Turkey and refer to it in a scary way, emphasising on their unjustified feelings of fear. Let's make it clear; everything is about religion, about Islam, through which religious terrorism and insecurity in France are diffused. With Turkey being seen, above all, as an Islamic nation, its Christian past, its belonging to the Occidental civilisation, their general reforms on internal policies and its immeasurable conviction that its place is in Europe, are under-estimated.

We have to say, though, that there is neither proper communication nor information about Turkey. Public opinion is generally influenced by the position of the national press, by the perception of determined intellectuals and by usual clichés. The Europeans know about their Turkish neighbours only through immigration, which generates a vision deformed by subjective codes mostly based on social and economic backgrounds. Ignorance often leads to refusal of the respective other. Therefore, the question is not about the European-ness of Turkey but about the famous "clash of civilisations". Nevertheless the definition of civilisation cannot only be restrained to the religious factor, as this would make any coexistence between Muslim and Christian (or rather non-Muslim) communities in Europe impossible. Is the problem really about laicism? I doubt it. It is merely about the accession of an Islamic, democratic and pacifistic country, which is rather unknown and therefore causes

uncertainty. The enlargement to Turkey demands a general review of the intention and future orientation of Europe as a whole.

The controversy about Turkey results from an endogenous crisis. The European Union is in need of a well-defined political project. Turkey showed the limits of the European construction which lacks consistency and coherence in terms of politics and culture. The European continent includes a broad inter-national diversity enhanced by the multicultural dimension. Europe, and in particular the EU, has not managed yet to define what it means with "European identity", but such kind of an initiative would solve some cultural ambiguities and would enable the establishment of a collective consciousness. Moreover, from a political view and thanks to its large surface and demography, Turkey would, after its possible accession, be led directly to the triumvirate leaving France behind. There would not be any obvious problems of political

Turkey showed the limits of the European construction which lacks consistency and coherence in terms of politics and culture. ”

representation if Europe was really a trans-national entity, like the European Parliament, where the political ideologies are more relevant than the

national barriers and interests.

French people wish to maintain some coherence and to go forward step by step to avoid any "suicide" of the EU by allowing the accession of Turkey, which is comprehensible as long as we stop to make Turkey wait for a response. It would be hard to cope with the entry of Turkey on economic and financial grounds. But the same statement could be made about Romania and Bulgaria, too. And if the debate should be held in terms of ideals and shared values, then Turkey could bring some new breath to Europe in line with the present time. The "Protestants of Islam" could reconcile Europe with the present and open a real perspective for the future.



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A warm welcome to a democratic Turkey in the EU

Tina Levysohn and Jakob Hansen

Turkey's accession to the EU would be a major step forward for both Europe and Turkey in terms of democracy, human rights, security, and prosperity.

During the last few years Turkey has made significant democratic reforms to its political system. The human rights situation has also improved dramatically. The prospect of membership in the European Union has made it possible to exert pressure on Turkey to move towards a modern democratic society. Due to these developments the living conditions of about 70 million people are now improving rapidly.

For Turkey to become a member of the EU these developments must continue. With the right pressure and the right incentives, there is reason to believe this will happen. Accession talks will exert exactly such pressure and provide such incentives.

A well-functioning and prosperous democracy in a Moslem country can serve as a role model for the rest of the Moslem world. The importance of such a role model cannot be overestimated. A very interesting aspect of the latest developments in Turkey is that it has not been the Westernised, secularised kemalist faction that has enacted the reforms. On the contrary, it has been the AKP - a political party explicitly based on Moslem religious values - that has driven the developments in a more democratic direction. If this project succeeds, Turkey will have shown that it is possible to reconcile a secular democracy that respects human rights with traditional Moslem values.

The accession negotiations may potentially promote a stable and secure zone around the Balkans and create a democratic spill over effect on the Middle East. One of the greatest threats to security in the world today is the perceived "clash of civilizations". The easiest way to create enemies is by singling out a particular group and treating it as evil. The ongoing representation of the Moslem world as an antagonist to the Western world and as the dangerous 'other' may, in the end, become a self-fulfilling prophecy. By embracing Turkey as a member of the European family this image of opposition will be dealt a serious blow.

Furthermore, Turkey is strategically and geographically a very important country for stability in the Middle East. With Turkey a well-functioning democracy inside the EU, Europe will have a much greater chance of promoting stability in this volatile region.

It has been argued that Turkish EU membership represents a potential threat to economic stability in the EU. Such membership, it is alleged, will create an overwhelming financial burden for the Member States, mainly due to the need for agricultural support. We believe that this assessment is wrong.

First of all, the relative cost of accepting Turkish membership is small compared to the European budget. A worst-case analysis performed by the European Commission shows that the cost of Turkish membership is expected to represent approximately

0.3% of the total EU GDP. The reliability of this estimate may be questioned since it is based on current EU policies-for instance, the Common Agricultural Policy. If these policies are reformed before Turkey becomes a member, the price will be even lower. There is certainly an abundance of good reasons why the CAP needs to be reformed!

Secondly, in the years to come, a 5% growth rate is anticipated in Turkey. According to the publication "Recommendations of the European Commission on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession", Turkey has made considerable progress towards developing a functioning market economy. Economic reforms have been initiated and are gaining ground, and the Turkish economy is expected to improve considerably before membership is actually granted. The economic growth and the aforementioned political developments promote stability in Turkey and in the neighbouring countries, which would again further the conditions for continued economic growth. For these reasons, it is unfair to base an estimation of the costs of Turkish membership on Turkey's present economy.

Finally, let's keep in mind that Turkey is not simply a cost for the EU. Turkey is also a huge potential market for the Member States. According to the Commission the financial benefits

will outweigh the costs, and overall the accession of Turkey is expected to have a small but positive economic impact on the EU.

Opponents of Turkish EU membership may rightly argue that EU institutions are not equipped for additional enlargements, and especially not for taking Turkey on board. But the sad truth is that EU institutions are not ready even for the enlargement we have embarked on now with ten new Member States. As JEFers we strongly believe that the EU needs significant reforms to promote an undivided Europe. The door should not be closed on Turkey because the Union is incapable of doing its homework. On the contrary, Turkey represents yet another good reason for encouraging strong, efficient, and democratic institutions in the EU.

As we have argued above, Turkish membership in the EU will promote stability, security, democracy, and human rights. If accession talks can be brought to a successful end over the next decade it will result in a richer and safer Europe, a stable and strong democratic Moslem country, and 70 million people living in a secular democracy with a commitment to human rights. It is no wonder that Santa Claus was born in what is today Turkey. This year he is offering his homeland as a Christmas present to Europe.

If accession talks can be brought to a successful end over the next decade it will result in a richer and safer Europe, a stable and strong democratic Moslem country

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Turkey: a fundamental choice

Ferran J. Lloveras

The most tangible yet symbolic element of European integration so far, the Euro, presents, in every single note, a map of Europe including the French Guyana, Guadeloupe, the isle of Reunion and the Canary Islands. Some might say these are the exceptions that confirm the rule. I would rather think these are proofs that political constructions go far beyond geography and that merely geographical arguments may be misleading in certain political discussions. The mission of Europe has always been the construction of a space of reconciliation, peace and prosperity. Just some months ago, the accession of the countries of the "Europe in between" has been regarded and celebrated as the logical end to most of the remaining divisions on the continent after that date. There are still some situations to address in this regard. Two of them date back not to the Second but also to the First World War: the Balkans and Turkey.

According to the EU decision, in any case, Turkey has at least fifteen years to go before its accession, in a long and open ended process. Fifteen years. That is to say, about a fifth part of an average European lifetime, a second in geological terms, and an eternity in politics. Spain joined the EC in 1986. Fifteen years before that date, in 1971, Spain was living in a dictatorship whose human rights record was far below the present Turkish democratic regime. The president of the government, Mr. Carrero Blanco, was a fundamentalist catholic, of course not democratically elected, and seen by the regime as the guarantee of the continuation of the "purity" of the "occident spiritual reserve" once the dictator would die. Spanish demands for accession to the EC had then been rightfully rejected. The whole situation changed rapidly in those fifteen years. It is my belief that Mr. Erdogan is far from Carrero's vision of life and politics. At the very least he has proved, in terms of political will and action, to be favouring a process that will lead his country to full completion with the Copenhagen criteria. The EU step of opening accession negotiations is a positive one for many reasons, both related to Turkey and to the EU itself.

With regard to Turkey, such negotiations are one more milestone in a long way underwent by this country not only since 1963, when the Association Agreement was signed, but since long before: since the kemalists started the building of a modern nation state

with the Europeanisation of Turkey as their leading goal. This was a way with many ups and downs, including the invasion of Cyprus and the persistence of pan Islamist and pan Turkish visions by certain sectors of the Turkish political elite. The present reform stage, particularly after the 2002 elections, represents a decisive step, which the EU should continue to monitor but also sustain and encourage. As it encouraged similar processes in other European countries, being an important vector of democratisation at least in Greece, Spain, Portugal, and the Central and Eastern European Countries. A strong and democratic Turkey can be a very important asset for the EU: it can prove the possibility of the coexistence between a modern Islam and democracy, thus denying the categorical opposition long sustained by many not so impartial scholars; it can be a fundamental ally for the promotion of stability, peace and prosperity in the Middle East; and it can make a decisive contribution to stop the ill-interested and self-reinforcing dynamic of the so-called clash of civilizations.

When seen from within the EU, the Turkish accession also offers a lot of positive opportunities. I do not believe it will be the end of European Integration as we know it, as some people point out recovering the enlarging vs. deepening debate. Such an opposition is hardly sustainable with the perspective of a 27, 28, 29 or 30 members Union. Variable geometry is already a reality, with the presence of several significant opt outs and ad hoc treatments, and has even been enshrined in the Constitutional Treaty with the instrument of reinforced co-operations. The eventual accession of

Turkey has at least fifteen years to go before its accession... That is to say, about a fifth part of an average European lifetime, a second in geological terms, and an eternity in politics.

Turkey will force new negotiations on many aspects, ranging from the institutional settings to the regional or agricultural policies. Such a new challenge should stimulate creativity in an evolving environment. But the biggest challenge lies within the present EU itself: the accession of Turkey represents a fundamental choice for the EU. The options are basically two. On the one hand, a Europe of citizenship, an open society that treats all its citizens in an equal manner, deepens democracy within itself while promoting it in the world; a Europe that accepts the reality of our present world, complex and multiple identities, and that strives decisively for leading such world. On the other hand, the alternative is a fortress. A Europe that continues to expand the perception of lack of solidarity, while alienating a part of its citizens by making them feel they have to leave their identity aside in order to be recognised as citizens. A Europe where difference is regarded as a threat rather than an asset, a Europe that will multiply the threats to liberty on account of an increasing need for security. It is both up to the Turkish and to the Europeans to make their choice. The latter by continuing their reform process, the former by not closing their doors to a changing world.



Understanding today's Turkey:

Turkish secularism and the importance of the army in the nation

Odile Bour

Erdoğan's past shows him as an Islamist hardliner. The irony of fate is that his party, the AK-Party (AKP means Party of Justice and Awakening - not Development as it is often translated - and is pronounced "akparty" meaning "the party of light!"), which has an overwhelming majority within the Turkish Parliament, is pushing through the European democratic reforms. How can this be?

First, one has to be reminded of Turkey's specific political tradition.

In the West, particularly in France, laicism goes with democratisation and was one of the major achievements of the 1789's French Revolution. Since then, and because the Church had been a powerful ally of the King in oppressing the People, secularism was seen as a democratic gain. Applying this French scheme on Turkey would be a gross mistake. In the 1920's Turkey, Mustapha Kemal imposed laicism in his authoritarian totalitarian way with the strong support of his army. The Turkish population was secularised without being asked. Thus Turkish laicism does not mean freedom like it does for instance in France. On the contrary, as laicism was imposed in a top-down way, it is religion which means freedom. And in this way, when there is a period of democratisation in Turkey, it often corresponds to a renewal of religion. To sum up the Turkish equation:

authoritarianism and secularism are opposed to democratisation and more

religion. Mustapha Kemal transformed Turkey into a secular state but the Turkish people remained and remain deeply impregnated by religion. This phenomenon can explain the success of the AK-Party in 2002, which claims the religious Islamic dimension as part of the Turkish identity.

Furthermore, laicism in Turkey does not imply the separation of state and religion but the strict limitation of religion to the private sphere (by having simultaneously religious practice and interpretation of the religion under public control of the State Religion Authority).



Can we think of a Turkey without its military? : Army and Nation

After the First World War, the Treaty of Sèvres (1920) consecrated the end of the Ottoman Empire, which lost all its European possessions except the Constantinople region, and its Near East provinces as Arabia, Armenia, Egypt, Iraq, Kurdistan, Palestine, Syria and the Smyrna region. The kemalist ideology and the national history of Turkey began only at that point. Refusing the Treaty of Sèvres, Mustapha Kemal started a revolt, the Turkish-Greek War and founded in 1923 the first Turkish national state, the Turkish



Republic. Being a soldier himself, he went on to establish a dictatorial regime in which the army had the say.

This traditional role of the army represents a heavy burden for today's Turkey. The AK-Party, looking for international recognition since willing to enter the EU, has to give the defenders of the "national security", in short the military, a domestic battle. The Turkish understanding of "national security" is rather extensive and hence it is worth mentioning: "the protection of the law against all kind of domestic and external danger as well as the preservation of the constitutional system of government, of the national existence and unity, of all interest at international level, including political, social, cultural and economic interests". And this understanding of nation impregnates deeply the whole Turkish population, even the pro-European AK-Party leaders. There is still a long way to go from this concept of Turkish nation to the European citizenship...

There is still a long way to go from this concept of Turkish nation to the European citizenship...



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On the battlefield of democracy in Belarus

Jens-Kristian Lütken

In 2004 JEF-Denmark started co-operation with Silba. Silba is a Danish youth organisation, which promotes democracy in Belarus in corporation with the European Movement Belarus and other organisations. The biggest project until now has been election monitoring and referendum in Belarus on the 16th and 17th of October 2004. The referendum was about changing the constitution, which then would allow President Lukashenko to run for a third term. With more than 80 international young observers conducting exit polls in all major cities, we were able to point out the huge electoral fraud engineered by the Lukashenko regime.



European Movement Belarus

Brest. On the border between Poland and Belarus. Between the free world and Lukashenko. It is the battlefield of democracy. For the European Movement in Brest it is a tough job to stand up against the regime and the KGB. Despite that, young activists are trying to bring Brest closer to the EU.

On election day in Brest the EU, democracy and rule of law seem to be far away despite the EU being in sight from the famous Brest Fortress.

Ten years have gone since Lukashenko became President. Belarus has abandoned its path to democracy and instead turned into an autocratic regime, making the country the last dictatorship in Europe. Belarus is a country without free media and the opposition is split and poorly organised. Journalists and professors that criticise the regime are fired from their jobs immediately. In some cases they have disappeared.



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Democracy Lukashenko's way

All major opposition candidates were dismissed from the elections because of a variety of excuses such as the judgement that they were spending "too much money" on their campaign.

The referendum didn't fulfill even the most basic democratic standards. At the polling stations one could find an official instruction, where people were told how to vote and to vote yes. Many observers saw ballots disappearing or being manipulated.

Surprisingly, most voters were willing to tell what they had been voting. By asking 4200 voters all over Belarus we got a significant result: while officially over 75% of the population voted in favour of changing the constitution, the result of the exit polls conducted by independent observers showed that less than half of the electorate voted in favour of amending the constitution.

The future of Belarus

There is no doubt that Lukashenko will do whatever in his power to avoid what has happened in Belgrade, Tbilisi and Kiev. On the other hand, the recent events in Kiev have inspired a lot of young people from the opposition to fight for democracy. Furthermore, the personal relationship between Putin and Lukashenko is poor and Lukashenko cannot count on loyalty and support from Moscow.

“...the recent events in Kiev have inspired a lot of young people from the opposition to fight for democracy...”

The EU has to support the opposition in Belarus much more than it is already doing today. The new neighbourhood policy is too weak and without

any vision for a truly united and free Europe. The EU must offer Belarus and the rest of the region EU membership if they fulfill the Copenhagen criteria. It is a clear signal to send to the opposition, and it will strengthen the opposition as real alternative to today's regime.



Moldovans and the EU's New Neighbourhood Policy

Ana Porumbrica

After the accession of Romania, scheduled for 2007, the European Union will directly border Moldova. As a result, the EU reconsidered its policy toward Western Newly Independent States (WNIS: Moldova, Ukraine and Belorussia) and the EU-Moldova relations started to gain increased importance. It is in the core interest of the EU to have an independent, politically stable and economically strong Moldova as neighbour. This is why the Republic of Moldova is part of the New Neighbourhood Policy of the EU that aims at creating an enlarged area of peace, stability and prosperity encompassing its neighbours to the East. It could also include them in some key policies of the EU as environment, research and development and trans-European networks of transport, energy and telecommunications, although, the main traits of the ENP are mostly related to trade and economic concerns. The new and special relationship would have as the widest possible option the integration of these countries into the EU.

As a broad overview, the attitude of the Moldovan citizens towards the New Neighbourhood Policy is proportionate to their knowledge and views on the Union and to their opinions on Moldova's integration into the EU. Usually younger people are more familiar with the EU. They appreciate the New Neighbourhood Policy that offers an ambitious and



realistic framework for further reinforcing EU-Moldova relations, allowing Moldova to benefit fully from EU enlargement. Unfortunately, the number of people, which belong to this portion of the population, is low. Moldova is facing a huge information problem and this is one of JEF Moldova's major priorities for the near future. There activate a few NGOs that work on guiding and motivating young people to participate in different activities, they represent the Moldovans that have tried in vain to access an Erasmus program or have spent a tremendous amount of time on obtaining a Schengen visa.



Secondly there are the citizens that feel indifference, that do not see the real benefit of Moldova joining the EU. They are the "ignorant bunch" who are not interested in checking on an issue or building their own opinion about it. The cause of this indifference sentiment is lack of information, no motivation from

The interaction between the EU and Moldova will require clear defined policy mechanisms - the New Neighbourhood Policy and the EU approach on settling the Transnistria issue.

their side and there is simply deficiency of long-term visions.

Lastly there are the elderly communist generation who wish for Moldova to rather have intense connections with

the CIS block than entering the EU. They still have the nostalgia for old soviet times. It is disappointing that only these people are mostly interested in politics and participate in elections.

As a result of enlargement, Moldova will find itself closer to the EU's external borders. The interaction between the EU and Moldova will require clear defined policy mechanisms - the New Neighbourhood Policy and the EU approach on settling the Transnistria issue. The most important issue that needs to be solved is the Transnistrian conflict, where the EU's assistance is vital. On its part, Moldova, as other WNIS, is very vulnerable to challenges such as organised crime, contraband, arms smuggling and illegal migration, in this context Moldova should tighten its borders in order to combat these hindrances. The EU has clearly stated a desire to follow better defined policies towards Moldova. This shows again that the EU is a major actor in changing external environment.



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Wind of Change in Ukraine

Tanja Katsbert

For seventeen days, Ukraine was largely orange. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian citizens were wearing orange clothes, scarves and stripes, travelling in orange cars, eating oranges and staying awake in the streets, in snow and rain, in an "orange mood". The orange colour made those days bright and visible on television channels all over the world.

Various forms of protests were delivering one message: Ukraine had had enough. Enough of silence, enough of violation and enough of oligarchs that have made these presidential elections worthy of the Guinness book of falsification records. Having started in Kiev, the protests infected the whole Ukraine and then spread outside, reaching Warsaw, Berlin, Budapest, London, Paris, New York, and Toronto. Demonstrations of protest were initiated by Ukrainians, and supported by many fellow citizens, who were willing to defend their choice. Such a Ukraine was previously unknown to the world. Now everybody knows the names of the "two Victors", the major opponents in the battle for democracy (or lack of it) in Ukraine.



Let me go back in time and explain how it all happened. By the time I left Ukraine, the presidential election campaign was in full-swing. The streets of Kiev were overflowing with billboards presenting Victor Yanukovich's face. Under the gigantic face, there was the supposedly self-explanatory slogan of the campaign: BECAUSE. Every day, people were handing out Yanukovich-related flyers in public places. Television channels served passionately the powerful incumbent candidate and newspapers were doing the same. Even President Putin explicitly, publicly and repeatedly promoted Yanukovich. The costs of that presidential campaign, according to hearsay, were about the same as for George W. Bush: around 1.5

billion USD.

Meanwhile, the opposition leader Victor Yushchenko was refused any airtime on the pro-government TV. In addition, he was refused entry into regions largely isolated from information - Lugansk and Donetsk - that are traditionally regarded as faithful to the former governor Yanukovich, who is notorious for his criminal past. Furthermore, regional offices of Yushchenko's party "Our Ukraine" were set on fire in some cities.

“Various forms of protests were delivering one message:

Ukraine had had enough! ”

Student activists in the opposition movement "PORA" were arrested. A few weeks later, there was news about Yushchenko being poisoned during lunch with SBU (modern KGB), which made millions of people worry for his life.

Actually, only a few believed in the victory of "good Victor" over "bad Victor". Although pessimistic, people nevertheless came to the polling stations in the first round on October, 31st. The government confirmed Yushchenko's victory by the statistically insignificant margin of 0.55 %. Exit polls gave other information on numbers that differed 11% in favour of Yushchenko. Ironically, this wide gap of error gave great hope to many, and resulted in a re-vote on November, 21st.

Three weeks was enough to invent new methods of falsification not tried during the first round, e.g. pens with disappearing ink, electricity being turned off at some places at the time of counting the ballots, manipulated absentee papers enabling some to vote several times, blocking out election observers and so forth. Some polling stations even had a turnout of comic proportions - 114%. In spite of these mass violations, the Central Election Committee announced a victory for Yanukovich by a 3% margin. That was the breaking point for many.

People stopped working and went onto the streets, blocking traffic and shutting down administrative buildings. On the first day, there were 200,000 in Kiev. On the third, the number had reached 500,000 in Kiev, and hundreds of thousands more around Ukraine. Protesters stayed for seventeen days. The battle against the oligarchs has seemingly been won, even on legal grounds, since the Supreme Court nullified the results of the second round elections, and the Parliament has finally expressed a distrust of the current government.

The struggle along the path of democracy is never easy. But the hardship must be faced once to see the bright future. The Wind of Change has already come, and Ukraine will never be the same. The people of Ukraine have confirmed that they will stand for a well-deserved and better future. The songs of the Orange revolution, sung by thousands, were the songs of freedom. May they be blown by the Wind of Change around the world and inspire people of other countries to fight for their right to share together in the incredible spirit of freedom and unity.



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What future for Ukraine in the European Neighbourhood Policy?

Nina Baumeister

The Commission, the Heads of State and many in the European Parliament thought that with the delaying tactics of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the most important direct new EU neighbour, Ukraine, could just be ignored.

Among other countries Ukraine was included in the European Neighbourhood Policy with its overall goal of establishing a ring of friends around the EU. It was established under Prodi and includes all those countries around the EU and which are seen by the EU as not being able to join the club.

The European Neighbourhood Policy established a give and take mechanism in which the EU plans to give the participating countries everything except membership and demands the implementation of democratic values.

Another major weakness of this policy is that the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which is currently the basis for the EU/Ukrainian relationship, must be fully implemented before the European Neighbourhood Policy can start. But as this partnership agreement is outdated, e.g. JHA did not play a role in the early 1990s, the logic of a demand of full implementation is senseless.

Now that a civil movement has started in Ukraine - which at time of writing was not sure if it is able to gain victory over its claim that Ukrainians were cheated of free and fair election- last November the EU seems to

have woken up. The problem nevertheless is that it woke up too late and and that it sent too often confusing messages.

As the EU is promoting the implementation of democratic values it was amazing to watch how the EU did not do anything which helped to have a free and fair preparation of the election and during the Presidential elections themselves. Only as thousands of protesters in Kiev and other mainly western cities in and outside of Ukraine demanded that the true will of the Ukrainian people had to be mirrored in the electoral outcome and only as those protests transformed into a civil movement the EU started to react. It slept through the whole pre- electoral fraud and the first and second rounds.

But the EU did not just act late, it also sent confusing messages. Prodi said that Ukraine will never be a member of the EU but could take part in the four freedoms if it reforms. Barosso has now said that membership is possible, in contradiction to Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner, but only if the will of the Ukrainian people is followed, otherwise some not further defined sanctions will follow.

These kinds of politics do not help. The EU should not intervene in an independent country but should support civil society and the will of the people to lead their country in the way the people want it to be run. Only if this is achieved the Ukrainian people can decide if they want to be part of the EU one day or not. Wise changes in the European Neighbourhood Policy are necessary to help the country and its people to develop democracy. Any kind of sanctions which would really hurt the country would not only affect its people and make them shift more towards Russia but would hurt the EU economically and also politically as it then might raise a weakening neighbour with its behaviour. This can not be the goal of the EU.



Ukraine: Never Be The Same Again

Vitaly Pedchenko

Result of rerun of the runoff Ukrainian Presidential Elections 2004: opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko wins.

More than 12'000 international observers were supervising this event and said that it was the most democratic election to have ever took place.

After 13 years of independence Ukrainian people started and won their fight for democracy. Hundreds of thousands of people went to the streets to protect truth, freedom and their rights! This gives hope that the wind of change has finally arrived to Ukraine and it will bring a new democratic society.

One of the very important development consists in the fact that Ukraine was supported by all democratic countries and has seen real support from Europe. Also, this is an important factor for Ukraine because when the Russian Federation of the Putin administration tried to interfere into the internal affairs of Ukraine, the international community said "Russia no more". Ukraine proved that it's democratic, independent and a really European country and can solve its domestic affairs itself. But this of course will bring colder relations between Russia and Ukraine. The good news

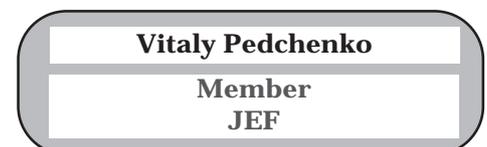
is that president Putin said that he would accept the result of the Ukrainian elections whatever it will be.

Another good news is that the Communists have received very little support in the presidential election, which highlights the big changes taking place in Ukraine.

Now that the revolution has successfully terminated, Yushchenko and his team face an array of challenges:

To unite Ukraine, to raise the informational blockade on the East and South of Ukraine, to organise and strengthen a team to establish new relations with Russia, Europe and the US and to accelerate the process of integration into the European Union.

As it was pointed out by the Viktor Yushchenko team the main course of Ukraine will be "European integration and new quality of life". The Orange Revolution can bring big changes and bring Ukraine back to Europe.



2004: The Point of no Return

Peter Bancroft

2004 has been a year in which the European political debate has radically changed. For once, it is the federalist movement which must ensure that it is not left behind.

Like the stampede of a herd of buffalo, major steps in politics are usually triggered by external catalysts. In 2004, that catalyst was the historic uniting of Europe with ten mainly ex-communist countries joining the EU as full Member States. From the perspective of the idealist, there can be no finer purpose of for the EU than in acting as a guarantor of peace and prosperity to an additional 120 million people. From the perspective of the realist, each of the ten new members has undeniably brought their own skills and inevitably their own problems.

Living on the other side of that Iron Curtain has changed forever the perspective of those who lived through communism. The "old" EU should not be afraid those who have learnt the lessons about stagnation and political totalitarianism: They will remind us not to be complacent about our own politics by bringing actual experience of massive political and demographic changes. The older EU countries will have to undergo similarly aggressive changes in the next decade in order just to survive. We cannot turn back the clock.

If the winding path to enlargement seemed to take too long for the new EU Member States, then the yellow-brick road to the Union's first Constitution has felt like an eternity for federalists. Although the task remains to sell the document to Europe's citizens, never before has a consensus been reached amongst national governments. The brave Spinelli draft received enthusiastic support in just Italy and Belgium: those of us touched by the affliction to a "federal core" would do well to remember that the main difference between then and now has been the enlarging to a Union of 25, necessitating a more federal form of decision-making. Whatever happens now with the approved Constitution, too much has been invested in order to simply fall back on Nice. Again, we can never go back to how things were.

Just as any book review has to state a book's

contents as well as its structure, no analysis of the EU is meaningful without the context of the politics in which the structures operated. With the European Parliament elections, a new Commission and many important meetings of the Council, 2004 was always going to be a busy year. The difference between a busy year and a truly historic one is whether anything happened that will have an everlasting impact on exercise of political power.

The last year has been the year of the European Parliament which has gained more political credibility than in any year since the first direct elections in 1979. Although characteristically muddled and chaotic, the choosing of a new President of the Commission is widely considered to have taken into account the results of the European elections in which the European People's Party received the most votes. Even though the explicit provision will not come into force until the new Constitution is ratified, strong candidates from the Party of European Socialists were sidelined



after the party collectively received over 2 million less votes than their counterparts. Newly rejuvenated through elections and encouraged by their relevance in discussions over the new President of the Commission, the European Parliament managed for the first time to influence the makeup of the President's Commission team - famously declaring some of the candidates as either politically unacceptable or just plain incompetent to carry out their designated role.

The elephant in the corner has continued to be foreign policy. National elites continue to believe that it is most effective to either work alone or as a junior partner of the United States whilst amongst many pro-Europeans there remains a belief that the EU will develop almost independently to whatever happens outside it. The last year has seen an attempt to heal divisions over Iraq, whilst the Union militarily has taken on actual foreign peacekeeping missions in addition to expanding its theoretical influence with the creation of a number of targeted strike forces.

The success of the EU's negotiators in Iran demonstrated a new relevance for the Union as a player in world affairs. As 2004 closes, the positive influence of the European Union in Ukraine has helped the opposition take the country to the very edge of freedom and the decision to open accession talks with Turkey strengthens the hands of those promoting continental values in Turkey as much as it raises questions for the rest of us about our own identities and values.

Denying all this irreversible progress in 2004



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Where's the EU in the new UN Security Council proposal?

Lorenzo Cirio

In the past months Europe split on foreign policy but a common request came from all the capitals nevertheless: the demand for UN involvement in the Iraq crisis. This reliance on the UN was not only shared by every political leader but also by an overwhelming majority of civil society. Is this trust mutual? Judging from the proposals prepared by the UN secretariat on the reform of the UN Security Council, the answer seems to be no. In fact, neither the pyramidal nor the rotational architecture elaborated by the diplomats would give the EU a seat in the highest assembly.

The current body still reflects the balance of power of a world that no more exists: one with two rising super powers and two declining colonial powers. Moreover the decision making process characterised by unanimity leads Member States to act in the short term perspective of defending national interests. Consequently it is slow and difficult to reach compromises. More than one vital decision has been blocked by vetoes raised by one of the P5 only.

The recent German demand for a national permanent seat reproduces this old model of balance of power while the Italian government followed suit with a strong campaign to block this reform, not to support a different approach to world governance but to preserve its "global prestige". The same governments that ask Europe to speak with a single voice are ready to engage themselves in an anachronistic fight to enter an institution in which they would have no real influence.

Throughout its history, the Union has shown great support to the values and initiatives of the UN: the fact that EU Member States combined provide over 50% of international development assistance is testimony to this. The Constitutional Treaty establishes the new figure of an EU foreign minister, member of the

Commission but answerable to the Council. Some commentators welcomed this innovation as a way to answer Kissinger's question: "If I want to talk to Europe, whom should I phone?". Unfortunately, as long as each of the Union's foreign minister's propositions has to be unanimously approved by the Council, there is a real risk for the new foreign minister to act just as switchboard employee. A single seat for the Union at the UN Security Council would greatly strengthen the Union's foreign policy.

Probably the most striking consequence of the Union's entrance in the Security Council would be to clearly highlight the principle of regional representation. It is not possible to represent a region of the world through a sentinel country. Asking the Brazilian government, elected by Brazilian citizens, to defend the interests of the whole of South America is simply against the basic principles of democracy.

On the other hand, admitting the EU in the decision room of the UN would acknowledge the effectiveness of its model of integration for other regions in the world. The Union proved that it is possible to overcome centuries old divisions through peace and achieve economic wealth meanwhile. It would be a strong message for all the rising supranational communities, from Africa to South America, to show how far a process that dares to go beyond economics can go.

admitting the EU in the decision room of the UN would acknowledge the effectiveness of its model of integration for other regions in the world ”

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↳ would not be a successful strategy for the federalist movement. Our journey is diverting from the one laid out all those years ago, but so long as the sign on the bus says "European Federation", then we should admire the unexpected scenery rather than lambast it for being too hilly. The first European Constitution in particular has not been arrived at in the manner prophesized; however that does not mean we should call for the EU's leaders to just try again, as if they had made some kind of mistake.

The way forward for the Young European Federalists is, as always, to look to the world of the possible and be decisive in bringing about a European federation. This may seem a truism, but what it actually means is that we should never let ourselves be bound by the conventions of the past. We are asking proud nations

to move beyond principles that have felt safe for hundreds of years. In the federalist movement, we have no such excuse for conservatism.

So who are JEFers? Experts in Constitutional law? Parliamentarians or Civil Servants in waiting?

JEFers are agents of change, working with the European public and the political class in whatever way is most productive to bringing us closer to our goals. In some cases that will mean tackling issues that we are uncomfortable or unfamiliar with. In the current environment, it certainly will mean looking beyond institutional reform to the actual meat on the bones of a European federation.

The stakes are too great for this organization to be bound by convention. Let us rise to meet the challenges ahead.

YES - The civil society campaign for the ratification of the European Constitution

Marko Bucik

The European citizens and JEF have found themselves rarely in front of such an important moment as the ratification of the first European Constitution. Previous treaties have had perhaps the same legal importance for the European Union, but never has a document sparked so much debate and so many heated discussions as the Constitution has done in the past three years, i.e. since the beginning of the work of the Convention.

The debate whether federalists should support the Constitution of the Union or not, has been a long and colourful one. In the end, an agreement has emerged that although the Constitution is not a federal one JEF together with other pro-European organisations and most importantly with the federalists' family has to be at the forefront of a strong pro-Constitution campaign.

Why the necessity for such a strong commitment on the side of JEF? The work of the federalists during the Convention has been widely acknowledged. Through various methods of influencing the decision-makers on the national and European level, we contributed that the Constitution breaks with the past and moves the European integration towards a more political Union. We should always bear in the back of our minds: the present text is the first treaty that the Intergovernmental Conference got on the table already as a comprehensive draft and is the first text that comes as a product of a long democratic exercise - the work of the Convention. This is not to be neglected when we speak about the legitimacy of the Constitution and when we campaign for its ratification.

The YES Campaign therefore needs to move swiftly. Together with the European Movement International (EMI) and the Union of European Federalists (UEF), JEF has to set the stage for a long "battle" that will define the future of our continent. If we fail to live up to our commitments and if the Constitution fails to be ratified, the whole EU will face a considerably more destructive crisis than the one that arose from the non-approval of

the first Barroso Commission (which was in the end a positive development anyway...). We will remain hostages of the Nice Treaty and the old intergovernmental method that we are criticising now for so long. The EU of 25 and more will become an unstable organisation unable to meet the growing expectations of its citizens.



The planning is on its way. We have to rightly address several issues such as our strength, our relevance and our reach. Can we deliver enough in the period of the next two years? Can we make a significant addition to the possible YES campaigns as the civil society? Can we reach an amount of people that is relevant to the outcome of the referendums?

All JEFers across Europe should therefore join forces in order to achieve one goal: the ratification of the first European Constitution!

Even if hesitating to answer yes to all of these questions, we certainly need to participate in this crucial moment of European history.

In partnership with other pro-European organisations we have to form a strong pro-Constitution alliance that shall reach all Europeans from Helsinki to Athens. We should invest more of our efforts to inform the citizens about the positive aspects of the Constitution and convince them that voting in favour means supporting a better Europe.

Campaigning has always been one of our favourite methods and one of our strongest tools. Campaigning for a European Constitution has always been our wish! All JEFers across Europe should therefore join forces in order to achieve one goal: the ratification of the first European Constitution!

	<p>Marko Bucik</p> <hr/> <p>Member of the Executive Bureau JEF-Europe</p> <hr/> <p>Marko.Bucik@jef-europe.net</p>
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Aurimas Andrusis

How and why everything started

The idea that Lithuania might be one of the first EU Member States having ratified the Constitution for Europe has occurred after the launch of the election campaign to the Seimas (Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania), i.e. around the end of February 2004. Some of the more active and pro-European politicians have thought that such step would give a great sense of the four year term, especially after the joyful celebrations of the membership in EU and NATO were over. The idea itself might have been considered differently however no one has seriously launched any support or critique actions way until the draft Law on the Ratification of the Treaty Establishing the Constitution for Europe was presented in the plenary sitting of the Seimas. This was done by the Minister for Foreign Affairs Antanas Valionis on 5 November, 2004. The presentation of this law and adoption was not included in any work agenda of the Seimas, until the last moment.

Lithuanian question - marks

The discussion started. The questions were simple: whether to ratify, when to ratify and how to ratify? The content of the Treaty, no matter how strange that might seem, did not arouse any heated debates. That might have been because such a decision to the whole state, which has already accelerated in the highway of the European integration, would have been rather strange for both the ones who think strategically and those who invest into short time political gain. Thus those innumerable arguments against the principles, laid down in the treaty, were loud but fairly miserable. They were all the same during referenda on the membership campaign, based on emotions rather than on any analysis.



The choice of the ratification period was simple but has caused most of the discussions. They had to choose between the ratification in the Seimas of that term and ratification in the Seimas of another

term. The supporters of the slower process have thought that such an important document is worth wider and more mature discussions and explanations among themselves and explanation for the society.

Lithuanian laws allow ratifying international treaties either in the Seimas or by referendum. The political parties that have submitted the initiative to ratify the treaty in Seimas have deeply understood the advantages and disadvantages of both ways. However their aim was clear: to ratify the treaty in the Seimas. And necessarily in the one that has taken the country to the EU. When there are a lot of arguments in the political discussion, there are no in principle right or wrong arguments, the decision is taken by voting. This has happened in Seimas.

The Treaty in the Committee on European Affairs

The first important stage was the hearing in the committees. Formally the laws on the ratification of all treaties are discussed in the Committee on Foreign Affairs however this time the exception has been made. The main decision has been taken by the Committee on European Affairs (CEA). Such political consensus indicates that the Constitutional Treaty, at least in the subconsciousness of politicians, was perceived as a document of internal politics. This, in my opinion, is one of the most important results of the whole process of ratification. We hope that it would be a long-term result.

On November 10, 2004, the Law on the Ratification of the Constitutional Treaty was discussed in the main committee - CEA. The Minister for Foreign Affairs A. Valionis stated at that meeting: "The Seimas of this term has performed a tremendous work in harmonising the national laws with the legal acts of the European Parliament therefore it has a moral right to ratify this treaty" has resounded before, during and after the hearings in the CEA.

After a long discussion the committee has approved that the Treaty should be ratified in the Seimas of that term.

Hearings in the plenary

On November 11, 2004 the Constitutional Treaty was discussed in the plenary sitting of the Seimas. The pikes were leaned against each other and broken once again starting from the fights under the procedures of Statute and finishing by the discussions about the essence of democracy and the right of the people to know and chose. As all were right, the final results of voting were as follows: 84 MPs voted for the ratification of the Treaty on the Constitution for Europe; 4 voted against and 3 abstained (in total there are 141 members in the Seimas).

In my opinion the ratification of the Treaty on the Constitution for Europe in Lithuania by its essence is the triumph of federalism as this is a step forwards both historically and politically. Indeed the historical significance of such a step will be estimated by our grandchildren, but politically and geopolitically the ratification of the treaty is a long-term and assured investment. The political discussion in Lithuania has raised one step above; the Treaty on the Constitution for Europe will become a constituent part of the general political discourse. However the most important thing was that after the ratification everybody felt like they have completed a difficult but good and necessary work. Hungary has followed. Who will be next?

Aurimas Andrusis

**Former President
JEF-Lithuania**

As a young unmarried Western woman in Istanbul

Odile Bour

Last summer I was awarded a scholarship from the French Foreign Office and the Turkish Government to spend both months of July and August at Istanbul Universitesi to improve my Turkish. Having spent my childhood with Turkish immigrants and working at the European Parliament I saw the growing importance this country was going to take in EU-affairs.

My first visit in Turkey with JEF-Germany had been a tremendously interesting experience, but remained focused on high level politics while I was now interested in getting acquainted with the grass root Turkey. Here a few out of many observations I could make during my Stambouliot stay this summer.

Our accommodation, for female students only, was a dormitory in the middle of Sultanahmet, a touristic and working-class neighbourhood, next to the red light quarter of Laleli. A rather pleasant and welcoming surrounding... In the dorms there were a lot of Tatars from Crimea and Albania and a few Egyptian girls. Another group consisted of European turkology students and a few participants of Turkish origins. Besides the fabulous view on the Bosphorus and a balcony overlooking the yard, a eight-person dormitory offered eight beds, eight army-like cupboards and two neon-lights, the whole in a surrounding temperature of 29 °C. Rather Spartan. No wall plug. In return, there was a wall full of plugs in the basement so you could recharge your mobile or epilator in (a feminine) public. Not far from the seraglio atmosphere! At the entrance, two guards (male) were in charge of not letting in aliens and males. Their mission was harder: enforcing the midnight curfew.

Administration and efficiency

To get our grant, our student-ID, whatever, to register for the language classes, and after having being sent to the four corners of town to pick up forms, to have your ID-photo shot in the Turkish kitschy style and so on you could seat down for a while actually for a few hours. This is the time Turkish administration employees (but in a bank also!) need to handle basic office tasks. Explanation: first they work without computers. Anyway, these offices seemed to be stuck in a 1970's atmosphere where a computer does not exist. Secondly you have a plethora of non-skilled employees who open the passports, Xerox them, hook the copies, serves tea. And a skilled employee handles all these tasks alone. At first sight, this scene looks really absurd. But it may be a way to avoid more unemployment... in sacrificing efficiency indeed. The nice thing is you get tea and lemon-smelling eau de cologne to

wash your hands and refresh. When you are lucky enough, you can even choose between normal black tea and elma çay or apple tea, one of the peculiar Turkish tastes.

Headscarf and religiosity

Speaking from Istanbul and what I have seen from the Western Coast, there are no striking differences in the outfit in comparison to Western Europe. And searching for veiled women to deduce then the religiosity of a person may not be the most pertinent criterion to test the influence of Islam in Turkey. But the omnipresence of the religious topic stroke me. After three days meeting and discussing with younger and older Turks I was wondering why they were -and not I- again and again introducing the headscarf topic in the discussion and why after five minutes of discussion we always ended up speaking about religion. Once I met a nice modern-clothed English-speaking girl. She was student representative of her (private) university. I thought I had found the emblem of the new Turkish women... Until she told me she did not feel ready and mature enough to wear the headscarf and hence be a good Muslim woman. But in a few months she would. An example to show that a secular state can coexist with a religious society and that women can look very westernized and still wear the headscarf on their head. For their part, a large amount of men were quasi obsessed with marrying a "clean" and thus good Muslim woman. They were speaking about "moral cleanness" while meaning physically virgin. On the other hand, they did not think necessary to have such expectations toward themselves and were gaining experience in due form with foreigners (male and female). Or how too strict religious precepts breed hypocrisy and constraint. Nothing new under the sun.

Being a foreigner in Turkey

First of all, as foreigner in Turkey it is hard to overcome the tourist status. In many places, looking like a non-Turk will lead you to be treated like a cash-cow: 10 Euros here (Ayasofia), 10 Euros there (Ephesus). And you do not need to ask: there is no student discount for foreign student. Then you have a decrescendo hierarchy in the way you get considered: among foreigners there are Muslims and Infidels, among Infidels you have men and women and among woman, respectable married woman with kids and less respectable -to use an euphemism- young women travelling on her own.

How to get the hotel room you reserved one month before? How to be reimbursed the money of your first class bus ticket when you realise what you got was a third-class seat? How to react when at Istanbul airport, your plane taking off in a few minutes and the security man is checking your laptop on files susceptible to threaten the Turkish national security? Two solutions depending on whether you have time and energy to invest or not. First possibility, you start a scandal and let it



EU already in 10 towns of Serbia and Montenegro!

Aleksander Borisavljević

Recent research shows that in Serbia and Montenegro more than 80% of citizens are in favour of joining the European Union. But when it comes to what this process really means and to changes that must be done to start getting closer to the EU, it just seems the citizens lack information.

In order to change that, the European Movement in Serbia, the Young European Federalists Belgrade and the Generation 21 have started the Euro Star Bus programme. The project was realised with the support of the Royal Dutch Embassy, the Embassy of Sweden, the British Council and the British Embassy, the Delegation of the European Commission in Serbia and Montenegro and the European Agency for Reconstruction.

What is the Euro Star Bus?

The Euro Star Bus programme is a pilot informative campaign implemented under the title "My town in Europe". The aim of the campaign was to inform citizens about the main aspects of the European Union and the EU integration process, promote European values, increase the level of knowledge of youth about EU related issues, especially in smaller towns, and to raise the level of youth participation in promotion of European issues in Serbia and Montenegro.

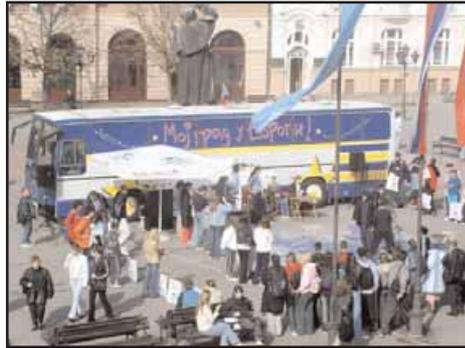
Activities...

The campaign "My town in Europe" was implemented from September 8th till November 17th, 2004. During this period, the Euro Star Bus visited 10 towns in Serbia and Montenegro and realised numerous activities. The main activities took place in town squares, where activists were distributing information and educational material and talked with citizens about the EU, while the latter could also visit an EU library in the bus itself, with materials from almost all EU countries, donated by Embassies. A team of activists had also organized an "EU Quiz", where children from local schools had a chance to learn the basics about the EU and win valuable prizes. In each

visit activists had also organized an educational competition about the EU for adults, an art contest for pupils in elementary schools, workshops in high schools, visits of Ambassadors from EU countries to local municipalities and other cultural events.

What were the results?

More than 30 TV and radio coverage's, 9 visits to TV studios, more than 30 articles in newspapers with several front pages, 40.000 leaflets and 10.000 booklets about EU, 10.000 stickers, 8000 posters and around 1000 balloons, EU flags, T-shirts and caps distributed to citizens. This and numerous activities (with the direct involvement of 2000 children) started changing the low level of understanding for EU related issues in the country.



What is next on the road towards the EU for Serbia and Montenegro?

Unfortunately, informing the population about the EU is not enough. In the current situation of uncompleted privatization, uncertainties about the final status of Kosovo, the lapsing of the Belgrade agreement about the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro at the end of 2005, who can say when the people from Serbia and Montenegro will join the EU? This near future will show how ready the political structures are for EU integration. But until these important issues are resolved, citizens must know that joining the EU is one of the most important goals for Serbia and Montenegro that almost purely depends on them.



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← grow. Wait until the boss arrives and take then your mobile phone and call your embassy or consulate. Instant results: you obtain a better room or a better bus seat that you initially booked. The second solution better fits to women and especially when you are fed up with all, have a nervous breakdown! The threatening looking security man who is checking your laptop on dangerous files for the Turkish territorial integrity will suddenly turn into a gentleman, give back your laptop and accompany you gallantly to the gate.

Another point: Turkish buses. Bus is the most common way of travelling since the railway infrastructure is slow and underdeveloped. You buy a ticket with a reservation. But until the bus is booked up you don't know which place is going to be yours since there is a special order depending on your gender: men in the front of the

vehicle, then couples and women in the back.

So much to my Turkish ventures. I must add I have left over the delicate anecdotes the censure did not allow to lay down on paper. This two-month experience in Turkey led me to review my original scepticism toward feminism and I understood its whole sense and raison d'être. Being not respected as a human being because of your gender leaves you with the following choice: either you give up being a woman or you become a red-blooded feminist.

I read a lot about Turkey before coming here and I have never read anywhere what I experienced there. Are there only men writing on Turkey? And this is to say I am only speaking about Istanbul and the touristy area around Izmir and not the Eastern Turkey.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Neum, September 12-16, 2004 SEE Training Days - Strengthening Civil Society in South-Eastern Europe

Katarina Grgas and Mitja Brus

The Training Days once again proved to be one of the most successful JEF projects in the region! It contains everything - an enviable co-operation among many sections, well structured and high quality learning techniques, amusing social activities and successful follow-up activities.

JEF Slovenia, JEF Croatia, JEF Norway and JEF Bosnia and Herzegovina equally contributed to the success of the Training Days. The division of the tasks was well planned and the mutual co-operation among our sections got even stronger.

The programme was problem-solving oriented. 38 participants were divided into 6 working groups, each writing its own realistic project proposal (Youth Programme Actions 1 and 5, Give

Europe a Face project, national seminar, SEE EuroBus, SEE JEF Newsletter). Experienced trainers provided the participants with professional knowledge about writing project proposals, project management, team building,



public advocacy, fundraising (primarily Youth Programme) and public relations. Some project proposals were implemented immediately after the seminar.

Moreover, we were very pleased to host the President, the Secretary-General and two EB members of JEF Europe, which gave an important boost to mainly inexperienced

participants and informed them about JEF and its policies.

Finally, the social activities proved to be very successful once again. We used mainly pedagogical games that were aiming at building friendly ties between the participants - an important element in the region, where nationalist sentiments are still very much alive. Once again the seminar reached its peak with a boat ride, where participants were able to continue their work in the middle of the beautiful Adriatic Sea.

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Malta, Pachaville, 1-8 October, 2004 The Malta Incubator: New Sections' Training Course

Steven Attard

There is a classic quote on leadership that goes, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." The "Malta Incubator" touched the fundamentals of creating, building and growing a new JEF section. Over 40 participants from 22 countries came together in Malta to practise the skills and knowledge required to build a sustainable JEF section.

The Malta Incubator focused on building political competences among our new and young sections, as well as developing the fundamental skills and knowledge such as creative thinking, project management and team-building.

The Training Course was divided into three main parts, an introduction to the Skills and Knowledge areas, intensive Training on Key areas and Practising the learnings.

It was a hot and steaming first week of October where during a session with Professor Edward De

Bono, participants learnt new opportunities to think differently about the politics and organisational issues that we face.

This would be reflected in the whole design of the course. Taking a practical approach to managing a section, participants engaged in an extremely productive session on Project Management by the JEF-Europe Secretariat. Highlighted in a dedicated session were also the core elements of a communications strategy that underlines our target groups, messages, objectives and tools which are signs of things to come for JEF.

Finally, we put into practise the skills that we worked on during the week. This especially included the development of local and trans-national activities, political debates, lobbying, peer-led knowledge-sharing and the implementation of street actions.

Political training is more than essential in our organisation and I really hope we could begin to see such sessions that aim to increase the political activity of JEF sections pop up more often at our events.



	Steven Attard
	Chair of the Working Group: "New sections, new members" JEF-Europe Steven.attard@jef-europe.net

Saray Espejo Benito

On the past 25th of November, JEF made another step forward to build a more democratic Europe. Together with the Comite Ukrainen de Secours en Belgique, the Union of Ukrainian Students of Germany, and the Union of Ukrainian Students in France, JEF Europe and JEF Strasbourg organised on the Round-point Shuman in Brussels - just in front of the finally inhabited building of the Commission, and Justus Lipsius building - a demonstration in reaction to the political crisis in Ukraine. The reason behind the public protest was the presidential elections in Ukraine held on the 21st of November. On the side of the European civil society, there were serious concerns about the lack of transparency that the international community should not accept. Thus, we once more assumed our responsibility and jumped on the streets to fight for the rights of the Ukrainian citizens, demanding their right to have a democratically elected government able to lead their country according to a legal framework which respects their will.



people, mainly Ukrainian citizens living in Belgium, Germany or France but also citizens from other European countries. During the protest, which was in some moments very emotional, members of the European Parliament expressed their opinions and demands for the future of Ukraine asking as well for a more clear position of the European Union in the conflict. At the end of the demonstration JEF had the opportunity to read a declaration in support of democratic elections, signed by all the organizations that attended to the event. The letter was subsequently sent to the President of the European Parliament, Mr. Josep Borrell and the President of the Commission, Mr. Jose Manuel Durao Barroso.

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The demonstration was attended by around 1500

France, Strasbourg, December, 2004 A Europe close to its citizens: a reality, a dream, an illusion?

Christian Klipfel

In December JEF-Strasbourg and JEF-Baden-Württemberg co-organised their 16th Talks of Strasbourg (Franco-German seminar based on the cooperation in the Upper Rhine region).

The 50 French and German JEFers started the seminar by focusing on the concrete example of the Upper Rhine region. There we learnt how the EU helps its citizens in their everyday life. Then we moved on to the social Europe, which is often seen as being a major failure of the European integration. Until the 1980s, Member States agreed to keep the control over that sensible policy; meanwhile the situation is slowly changing. Another major illusion for the EU-citizens is the CFSP of the EU. More and more citizens consider that Europe should have a say in international politics. The Ukrainian case showed that not only EU-citizens want the EU to be more active, but equally that its position can strongly influence the situation. Our debates also reached the crucial issue of the European Constitution. We agreed that despite its imperfections, it represents, especially with regards to the Nice Treaty, a big step forward. However, we stressed the urgent need for



more and better information on the Constitution. Besides our convivial evenings at the Strasbourg Christmas market, we also learned more about JEF and its partner organisations. The seminar ended with working groups on the ways to campaign for the constitution and on the pro/contra arguments. Using diverse means of communication to reach all the citizens, we will strengthen, but not overstress, the changes introduced by the text: more visibility, a stronger role for the citizen, etc. All participants saw it as a good preparation for the difficult campaign to come, but also a reaffirmation of the core place of the citizens in the Europe we are building.

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Do you want to support JEF not only morally but also financially?

Of course running an activity from the size of the new Convention project "Give Europe a Face" involves a lot of expenses. Thus we would be very grateful for every donation.

You can make a donation by bank transfer to:

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Call for Contributions

Enjoyed this edition of The New Federalist? Or maybe you think that you could do better?

Well now's your chance! If you think that you could write a suitable article then get in contact with the Editors! Every issue we try to include a range of articles from across Europe and covering a wide range of topics, but all of them are written by people just like you.

They range in size from 250 words for a very short report to a thousand for a two page feature. Articles with suitable quality photographs are especially welcome.

Help to make The New Federalist YOUR Magazine.

Calendar of Events

January

- * 20-23, Big Give Europe a Face event, Brussels, Belgium

February

- * 25-27, Between Aim and Reality - ratifying the European Constitution, Berlin, Germany

March

- * 13-20 Dinner For 25- Solidarity and Equal Rights in the EU seminar, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- * 18-20 Federal Committee, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Other events can be found on our website as details are made available.

You can register for our regular e-mail newsletter from JEF at <http://www.JEF-Europe.net/>



The Young European Federalists (JEF) is a supranational non-party political youth organisation with over 30,000 young members from 35 European countries. The aim of JEF is to work for the creation of a European Federation, as a step towards a peaceful, just and democratic world order.

Build the Europe you want. The European Union is one of the biggest achievements of the European history, but it is still far from what the European citizens are entitled to expect. A true European Federation is needed to fully achieve democracy, economic prosperity, social justice and environmental protection. With JEF you can have your say on the future of Europe. Shape the future you want.

JEF members carry out the following actions on the national, regional and local levels: putting forward the arguments for a European Federation, lobbying governments and decision-makers to support our vision of Europe, raising public awareness of European unification and its importance, promoting federalism, the political thought of "unity in diversity".

JEF-Europe, the supranational level of the organisation, provides its sections with information, publications and support, and offers its members the following activities: transnational campaigns, like the one for a European Constitution and the enlargement of the Union, public events and demonstrations at the important European summits, to show that citizens support federal Europe, seminars on European unification and federalism, allowing young people from all over Europe to meet each other.

JEF is the youth section of the Union of European Federalists and is member of the International European Movement and the World Federalist Movement.

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